

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2088

INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 5362

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, ID

SUBJ: SUHARTO TAKES HARD LINE AGAINST SUBVERSION

1. SUMMARY: IN WIDELY REPORTED REMARKS TO FULL CABINET SESSION APRIL 30, PRESIDENT SUHARTO SAID "SUBVERSIVE" FORCES ASSOCIATED WITH JAN 15 JAKARTA RIOTS STILL THREATEN INDONESIA, AND WARNED OFFICIALS TO GUARD AGAINST EFFORTS TO DISCREDIT GOVERNMENT. HE INCLUDED AMONG SUBVERSIVE INFLUENCES "DISTORTED" FOREIGN PRESS REPORTS, TENDENTIOUS CLAIMS THAT HE HAD ABOLISHED PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT POSITIONS AND TAKEN OVER KOPKAMTIB LEADERSHIP HIMSELF BECAUSE OF CRITICS' DEMANDS, AND CHARGES OF DISUNITY IN THE MILITARY. SUHARTO ALSO REPORTEDLY ADVISED PARTICIPANTS PRIVATELY AT CLOSE OF SESSION THAT HE WOULD NOT TOLERATE DISLOYALTY OR CRITICISM WITHIN HIS ADMINISTRATION AND THAT THOSE WHO DISAGREED WITH HIS POLICIES SHOULD RESIGN. FOLLOWING BASED MAINLY ON PRESS REPORTS MAY 1. END SUMMARY.

2. OCCASION FOR PRESIDENT'S REMARKS WAS PLENARY CABINET SESSION (ATTENDED BY ALL DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY CHIEFS AND PRINCIPAL DEPUTIES) AT WHICH REPORT ON JAN 15 INCIDENT WAS PRESENTED BY LT. GEN. YOGA SUGAMA, CHIEF OF BAKIN
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(INTELLIGENCE COORDINATING BOARD). ACCORDING TO GOI

SPOKESMAN MASHURI, WHO BRIEFED PRESS AFTER SESSION, SUHARTO SAID PROBLEM OF JAN 15 AFFAIR SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED RESOLVED. HE SAID THREAT OF CONTINUED SUBVERSION FROM WITHIN THE COUNTRY AND FROM ABROAD BY ELEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH JAN 15 REMAINS GREAT.

3. AS EXAMPLE OF OUTSIDE SUBVERSIVE INFLUENCE, HE CITED "DISTORTED" FOREIGN PRESS REPORTS DISCREDITING GOI BASED ON INFORMATION FROM HOSTILE SOURCES IN INDONESIA. HE ALSO MENTIONED EFFORTS TO CREATE DISSENSION WITHIN DOMESTIC LEADERSHIP SUCH AS STATEMENTS THAT HE HAD BOWED TO CRITICS' ATTACKS IN ABOLISHING POSITIONS OF PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANTS (ASPRI'S) AND ASSUMING CONTROL OF KOPKAMTIB AFTER JAN 15. IN FACT, HE SAID, ATTACKS ON ASPRI'S AND KOPKAMTIB WERE INTENDED FOR HIM PERSONALLY, AND HE TOOK THIS ACTION BECAUSE HE COULD NOT BEAR TO SEE HIS ASSISTANTS BEING MADE TARGETS FOR ATTACKS AIMED AT HIM.

4. ANOTHER FORM OF SUBVERSION, HE SAID, WERE CLAIMS THAT HE HAD ATTEMPTED TO CONCEAL DIVISION IN ARMY RANKS AND FAILURE OF ARMY TO COPE WITH JAN 15 RIOTS BY PRAISING THEIR PERFORMANCE DURING RIOTS. IN FACT, HE SAID, TROOPS DESERVED HIGH PRAISE FOR DISCIPLINE IN FOLLOWING HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO AVOID SHOOTING AT RIOTERS, EVEN UNDER EXTREME PROVOCATION, AND THIS DISCIPLINE WAS EVIDENCE OF ARMY UNITY.

5. IN COMMENTS ON BAKIN REPORT ON JAN 15 INCIDENT, MASHURI SAID IT SHOWED THAT INVESTIGATIONS HAD PRODUCED "CLEAR AND CONCRETE EVIDENCE" THAT INCIDENT HAD BEEN PLANNED FAR IN ADVANCE AND WAS NOT A COINCIDENCE. ARRESTS, DETENTIONS AND ANTI-PRESS MEASURES CARRIED OUT AFTER RIOTS WERE THEREFORE NECESSARY, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH CONSTITUTION, HE SAID, NOTING THAT PRESIDENT EXPECTED CONCLUSIONS OF BAKIN REPORT WOULD FORECLOSE FURTHER DEBATE ON JAN 15 AFFAIR.

6. MASHURI ADDED THAT ADDITIONAL PREVENTIVE MEASURES SUCH AS THOSE TAKEN AFTER JAN 15 MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO COMBAT SUBVERSION, AND THAT HE WOULD NOT ELIMINATE

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POSSIBILITY THERE MIGHT BE FURTHER DETENTIONS, DEPENDING ON RESULTS OF INVESTIGATIONS STILL IN PROGRESS.

7. AT EVENING FUNCTION APRIL 30, AMBASSADOR WAS TOLD BY LOGISTICS BOARD CHIEF BRIG GEN ARIFIN, WHO ATTENDED CABINET SESSION, THAT SUHARTO ADVISED GROUP IN UNREPORTED STATEMENT AT CLOSE OF MEETING THAT HE EXPECTED COMPLETE LOYALTY OF HIS SUBORDINATES. THOSE WHO COULD

NOT ACCEPT HIS POLICIES SHOULD RESIGN, THE
PRESIDENT SAID, ADDING HIS RESPECT FOR ANYONE
WHO RESIGNED BECAUSE OF HONEST DISAGREEMENT WOULD
BE FAR GREATER THAN IF INDIVIDUAL REMAINED ON IN
CABINET AND SOUGHT TEMPER PRESIDENT'S ACTIONS.

8. COMMENT: SUHARTO'S REMARKS ARE VIVID
EVIDENCE THAT HE SHARES THE HARD-LINE ATTITUDE
TOWARD OPPOSITION AND CRITICISM WHICH YOGA,
PANGGABEAN AND OTHER SUBORDINATES HAVE TAKEN
IN PUBLIC SINCE JAN 15 AND THAT THE "SUBVERSION"
EXPLANATION OF THE JANUARY AFFAIR IS ENDORSED AT
THE VERY TOP. HIS SWIPE AT FOREIGN PRESS REPORTS
IS A NEW INDICATION OF GOI IRRITATION WITH
INCREASINGLY CRITICAL REPORTING ON INDONESIA IN
WESTERN PRESS.
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